

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON STATISTICS.

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

I. HISTORICAL RESUMÉ.

The Committee on Statistics, in presenting their Report to the first General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church, thinks that it may not be amiss briefly to trace the progress which the Church has made, not only since the period when the union of the two Churches now forming the Canada Presbyterian Church was so happily consummated, but also to note the growth of the two sections of the United Church for some time previous to that event. In this way some idea of the work which has actually been accomplished by the Church may be obtained, and some facts, both interesting and useful, presented, which may be used with effect at missionary meetings. By such means our people, in learning some of the progress which the Church has made, would come to have a deeper interest in its welfare, and become more faithful, self-denying, and zealous in striving to advance its interests.

Going back on the history of that branch of this Church, best known by the term "Free Church," we find that in 1844—the year of the "Disruption" in Canada—there were fifty-four congregations in connection with the Church, only thirty-two of which were in the position of settled charges. It is, however, to be noticed that only twenty-three ministers composed the Disruption Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, which was formed in Kingston; while, at a meeting of Synod held in Toronto during the same year the number had increased to thirty-two. The clerical members of the Disruption Synod now remaining with us are:—Messrs. Duncan McMillan, Lobo; George Cheyne, Saltfleet; Donald McKenzie, Zorra; Daniel Allan, Stratford; William Meldrum, Harrington; George Smellie, Fergus; John M. Roger, M.A., Peterboro'; William Reid, M.A., now Agent of the Church; Robert Boyd, D.D., and Henry Gordon, retired; and Thomas Alexander, M.A., Percy.

In 1849 the number of ministers had increased to sixty, giving an increase at the rate of nearly four per annum. In the same year the number of communicants was returned as 4,974; which, it appears to your Committee, must have been very much under-estimated. In the year 1860—the year before the Union—the number of ministers had risen to 158, showing an increase of nearly five per annum. At the same time the membership had grown to 22,501, giving an average increase of 834 members per annum. The total number of families had increased from 7,000 in 1851 to 17,414 in 1860.

The total amount of contribution in 1849, was \$21,130.00. In 1860, the sum had expanded to \$139,315.00, the average contribution per member, in the former period, being at the rate of \$4.25 per member, for all purposes, while in 1860 it had risen to \$8.00, thus showing, most clearly, that the Church had made great and encouraging progress; and that while the country increased in wealth, a sense of responsibility in the minds of the people had kept pace with increasing ability, when, in the course of twenty years, the average contribution of our people had doubled in amount.

Let us now look at a few facts in connection with the history of the other branch of the Church. In 1834, on the first Thursday of May, the Missionary Ministers of the United Associate Synod formed themselves, by authority of the parent Church, into a Presbytery called the "Missionary Presbytery of the Canadas." There were nine ministers members of that Presbytery, only four of whom now remain, viz: the Rev. Thomas Christie, Flamboro'; Dr. Thornton, Oshawa; Dr. Taylor, Montreal; and the Rev. Wm. Fraser, one of the Clerks of this Assembly.

The labours of these brethren were so abundantly blessed, that the Missionary Presbytery changed its designation, in 1844, and became known as the Synod of Canada, consisting of 18 ministers, thus showing that in the course of ten years the number of ministers had been doubled. At this time there were twenty vacancies.